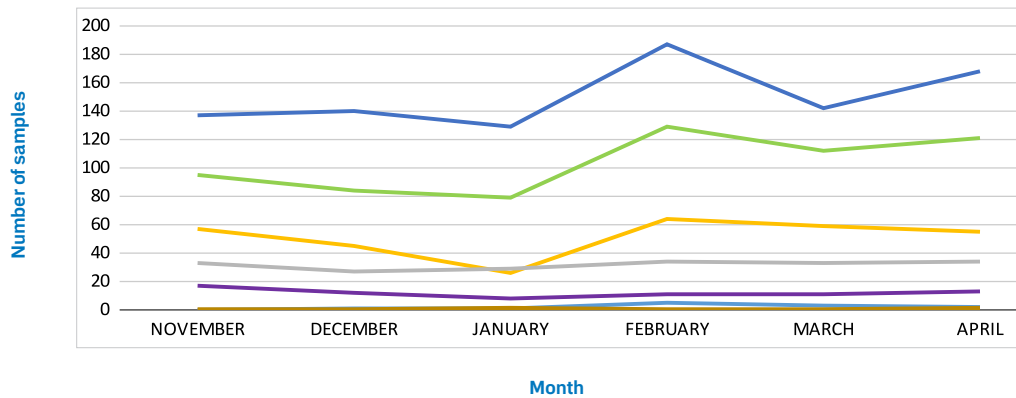


Key Findings

- In April, a total of 394 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Interior Health region.
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip decreased to 65.5% (110 of 168 samples).
- Benzodiazepines were detected by FTIR in 18.4% of unregulated opioids (30 of 163 samples), indicating their presence in higher concentrations.
- Multiple fentanyl analogues have been detected in unregulated opioids. The most recent to emerge, ortho-Methylfentanyl, was detected by FTIR in 3.1% of samples (5 of 163). Fluorofentanyl was detected in 57.1% (93 samples).
- Xylazine detection by FTIR in unregulated opioids increased from 5.2% to 7.4% in April (12 of 163 samples).
- Drug checking services are available at several locations in the Interior Health region. To find drug checking services near you, please see our [site locator](#).

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



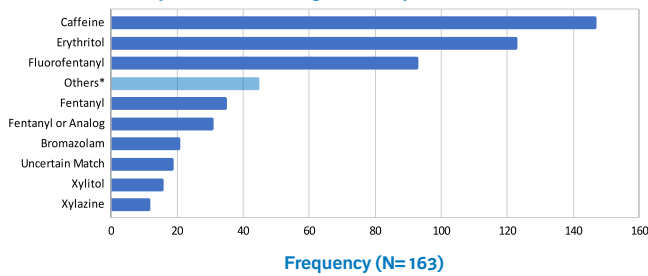
Number of samples by drug category in April

Opioid	168
Stimulant	121
Depressant	13
Psychedelic	55
Other	2
Polysubstance	1
Unknown	34

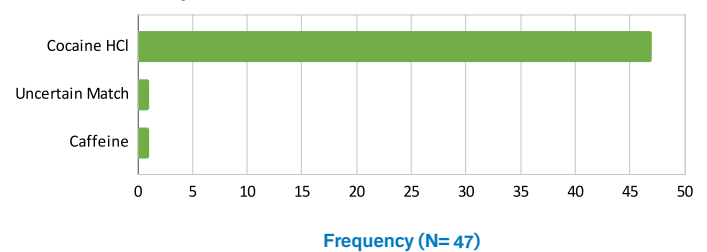
TOTAL: 394

Components found in drug samples in April

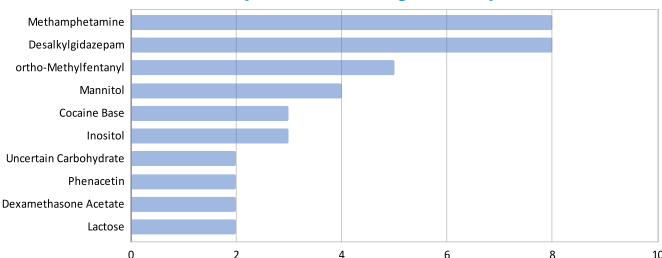
Components in unregulated opioids



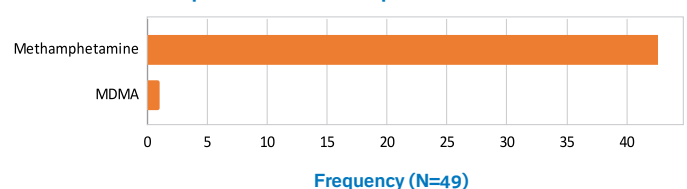
Components in cocaine



*Other components in unregulated opioids

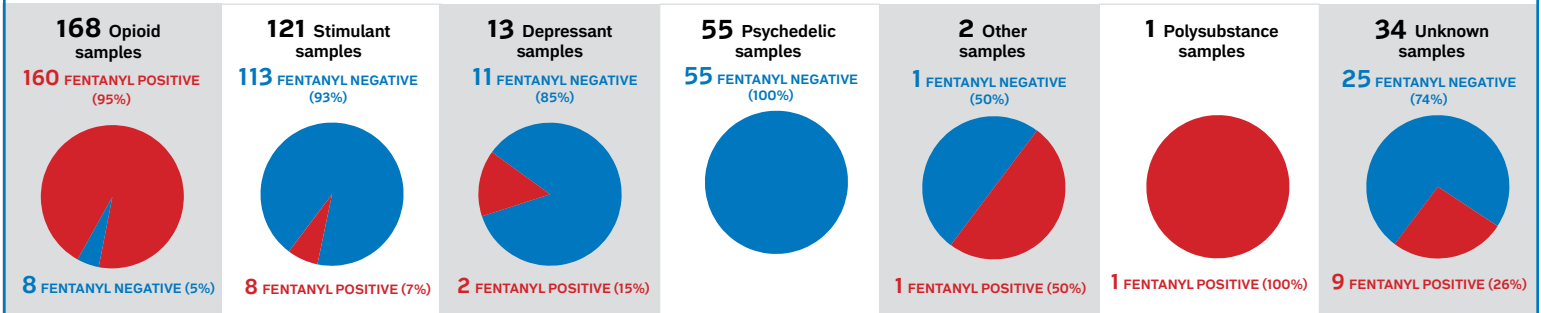


Components in methamphetamine



Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: ketamine, desalkylflurazepam, fentanyl base, microcrystalline cellulose, pentobarbital, sucrose, taurine, MD-MAPA

Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



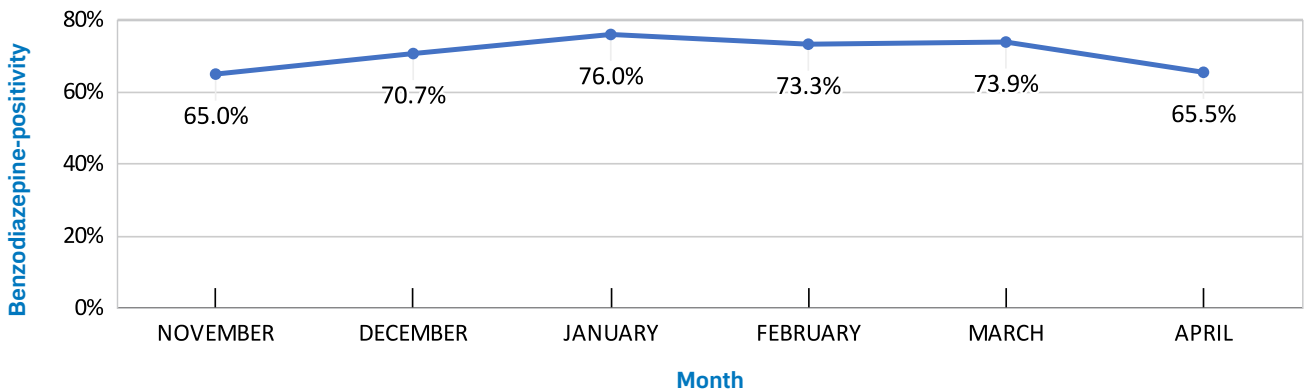
PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
April 18, 2024 West Kootenay Region	Down	Multiple samples containing Fluorofentanyl, Bromazolam	Positive	Positive	Samples of down tested with high concentrations of fluorofentanyl and bromazolam in the West Kootenay region.
April 18, 2024 Vernon	Down	Multiple samples containing Xylazine	N/A	N/A	Drug advisory for an increase in occurrences of xylazine found in down in Vernon.

*Note that etizolam and related benzodiazepine-like analogs do not consistently react to benzodiazepine test strips. Health authorities and community organizations issue further toxic drug alerts from sources other than drug checking. See their respective websites or social media accounts for more alerts..

For information about public health alerts in the Interior Health region, please visit:
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/alerts>

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the past 6 months



During the month of April, **65.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**110 samples of 168 checked**). Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The results presented here are derived from both of these technologies and are presumptive until confirmed by a laboratory.

Number of drugs checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
ANKORS (Cranbrook)	37
ANKORS (Grand Forks)	17
ANKORS (Nelson)	61
ANKORS (Trail)	15
ASK Wellness (Kamloops)	55
ASK Wellness (Merritt)	19
ASK Wellness (Penticton)	45
Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy (Vernon)	40
UBCO HaRT (Kelowna)	99
Total	394

Less than 5 samples were tested at each of the following locations, which are included in the total:
ANKORS (Castlegar), ASK Wellness (Williams Lake).

Number of samples with expected drug present

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Present	Not Present	Presence Not Determined	Samples Tested
Opioid	162	3	3	168
Stimulant	116	5	0	121
Depressant	10	3	0	13
Psychedelic	49	5	1	55
Other	2	0	0	2
Polysubstance	0	1	0	1
Unknown	0	0	34	34
Total	339	17	38	394

Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents

Depressant include:
benzodiazepines, etizolam,
GHB, hypnotics

Opioid include:
"down", heroin, fentanyl
(unregulated opioids), and
pharmaceutical opioids

Polysubstance includes:
cross-category mixtures






Psychedelic include:
MDMA and related,
2C-family, tryptamines,
ketamine, LSD

Stimulant include:
methamphetamine, "speed,"
cocaine and crack cocaine,
cathinones

Unknown includes:
samples where the individual
was unable to identify an
expected substance - this
includes found samples.

Number of opioid samples with expected drug present

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Present	Not Present	Presence Not Determined	Samples Tested
Fentanyl 	28	0	0	28
Other Opioid 	0	1	0	1
Down 	132	2	1	135
Pharmaceutical 	2	0	2	4
Total 	162	3	3	168

Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents. 'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Data represented here are collected from our partner sites across the province. Drug samples are tested using the Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectrometer in combination with fentanyl test strips and benzodiazepine test strips.

There is 5% fentanyl detection limit on the FTIR spectrometer (McCrae, 2019), and a drug check on any given sample consists of both the FTIR and BTNX fentanyl immunoassay test strip testing done in combination. When applicable, BTNX benzodiazepine immunoassay test strips are also used.

BCCSU gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following partners:

